



**Bureau of Land Management** 2300 River Frontage Road • Silt, Colorado 81652

## **BLM COLORADO RIVER VALLEY NEWS**

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### **BLM to conduct Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on Resource Management Plan for Roan Plateau**

SILT, Colo. – The Bureau of Land Management announced today that it will conduct additional environmental analysis for the Roan Plateau planning area in northwestern Colorado. The new planning effort and supporting environmental analysis will address deficiencies in BLM's earlier environmental analysis and Resource Management Plan Amendment identified by the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado.

The BLM will develop a new management plan and a supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) that will analyze a full range of alternatives for extracting the natural gas resources associated with the plateau, including the so-called "citizens' alternative" and a no action alternative, and consider the cumulative effects on air quality of oil and gas drilling in the surrounding region.

"We will address the specific rulings in the court's decision through this planning effort, which includes opportunities for robust public involvement," said BLM Colorado State Director Helen Hankins. "Public involvement will be critical to BLM developing a full range of alternatives to consider in the supplemental EIS."

Today's announcement initiates a public scoping period, which is an opportunity for the public to identify issues and review planning criteria. For more information about the SEIS and how to provide scoping comments, visit <http://on.doi.gov/WYIQ0S>.

(Full link: [www.blm.gov/co/st/en/BLM\\_Programs/land\\_use\\_planning/rmp/roan\\_plateau.html](http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/BLM_Programs/land_use_planning/rmp/roan_plateau.html)).

The BLM will hold two scoping meetings to help answer questions and take written comments. The public is invited to stop by anytime between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. at the following locations:

Feb. 27 in Silt at the Colorado River Valley Field Office, 2300 River Frontage Road

Feb. 28 in Grand Junction at the Clarion Inn, 755 Horizon Dr.

Scoping comments need to be received by March 30, 2013 and may be sent to:

E-mail: [roanplateau@blm.gov](mailto:roanplateau@blm.gov)

Fax: 970-876-9090

Mail: Bureau of Land Management, Colorado River Valley Field Office, Roan Plateau Comments, 2300 River Frontage Road, Silt, CO 81652

Following the scoping period, BLM will begin drafting management alternatives to be analyzed in the SEIS. When a draft of these alternatives is complete, it will be released for public review and comment.

Rising about 3,500 feet above the Colorado River Valley, the Roan Plateau is rich in both energy and natural resources. The plateau and surrounding lands are estimated to hold about 15.4 trillion cubic feet of technically recoverable natural gas resources on federal, state and private lands. The Roan Plateau is also home to genetically pure Colorado River cutthroat trout and several rare plants found few other places in the world. It provides important habitat for mule deer and elk, and contains riparian areas and high-recreational value scenery.

The BLM's Roan Plateau Planning Area encompasses about 73,602 surface and sub-surface acres, which are estimated to hold about 8.9 trillion cubic feet of federal natural gas. About 34,758 of those acres are located on top of the plateau, holding an estimated 4.2 trillion cubic feet of recoverable gas; while 38,844 acres below the rim (including cliffs) contain an estimated 4.7 trillion cubic feet of gas.

The BLM has temporarily suspended leases issued in 2008 until it makes a final determination regarding the management plan and the disposition of existing leases. That sale generated \$113.9 million for 54,631 acres in 31 parcels. (About 18,670 federal acres within the planning area had been leased in 1984 and 1999.) The State of Colorado received nearly \$56 million as its 49 percent share of the 2008 sale revenue.

Originally set aside as Naval Oil Shale Reserves #1 and #3 in the 1910s, the Roan Plateau was transferred to the BLM in 1997 from the Department of Energy with directions to lease the area for oil and gas development as soon as practicable, while protecting the plateau's wildlife, water and other natural resources. The transferred lands totaled 56,238 acres and the legislation required that the 12,029 acre-area below the rim, which already contained wells, be leased within a year.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

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